

SMOKELESS TOBACCO.....



not as safe as you might think

Do you use smokeless tobacco--commonly called snuff or chewing tobacco? Are you thinking about using it because your friends do it or because advertisements feature a popular athlete who promotes chew and says it's safe, clean, convenient and cool? You've heard of the dangers of smoking and you think smokeless tobacco will let you enjoy tobacco safely. Well, although smokeless tobacco is not as lethal as smoking, it is a definite health hazard that can cause visible damage in just a few months. Chewing or sniffing is also as habit forming as smoking.

A wad of snuff, finely ground tobacco, is placed between the lower lip and gum where it mixes with saliva, and the nicotine is absorbed through the lip, gum, tongue and throat. Snuff can also be inhaled through the nose.

Chewing tobacco, coarsely cut tobacco, is placed in the mouth, next to the teeth and gums and is sucked or chewed. Nicotine penetrates the lining of the mouth and is absorbed into the body. Excessive spitting usually occurs whether chewing tobacco or dipping snuff.

All smokeless tobacco is believed to cause oral cancer, dental problems and nicotine effects.

Cancer--Most snuff and pipe users develop a soft, white lesion in the mouth. This lesion, called leukoplakia, is caused by irritation from direct contact with tobacco juice. Five percent of leukoplakia cases develop oral cancer.

Dental Problems--occur because the tobacco causes shrinking of gum tissue. Shrinkage exposes the tooth and root and leads to decay, tooth abrasion and tooth loss.

Nicotine--causes constriction of blood vessels which increases blood pressure thereby increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Tobacco products also decrease the senses of taste and smell which could lead to an increase in salt and sugar intake.

Nicotine is also believed to be habit forming. It directly affects the nervous system causing a feeling of euphoria and stimulation which is followed by a psychological depression. Your brain only remembers the positive feeling, that is why you want to use nicotine again. To feel good, a person with a nicotine habit needs a "boost" about every thirty minutes while awake.

So, now you see that smokeless tobacco is far from harmless. Look at the facts. It's your decision.